

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC397933
Inspector	Janine Shortman-Thomas
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Cove Residential Care Services Limited
Registered person address	Cove Care Residential 16 Waterloo Road WOLVERHAMPTON WV1 4BL
Responsible individual	Lee Thomas Smith
Registered manager	Lee Thomas Smith
Date of last inspection	21/03/2014

Inspection date	12/11/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action taken since the last inspection.

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	adequate

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home is privately owned and offers placements for two young people who may have a combination of mental health, psychological, emotional or complex care needs that present challenging behaviour. The service is designed to offer medium- to long-term care placements.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/03/2014	Interim	good progress
27/11/2013	Full	good
21/01/2013	Interim	good progress
05/07/2012	Full	good

What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure the children's home is managed ethically, effectively and efficiently, delivering a service which meets the needs of its users, by ensuring there is close contact with the responsible Local Area Designated Officer of its geographical area (NMS 21)
- ensure there are clear and effective procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the home which are consistent with the local policies and procedures agreed by the LSCB relevant to the geographical area of the home. This specifically includes ensuring there are procedures available within the home on managing allegations and complaints about staff and the provision (NMS 21.1)
- monitor, in line with regulations, all records kept by the home to ensure compliance with the home's policies, especially in regards to the recording of medication when this is refused, to identify any concerns about specific

incident and to identify patterns and trends (NMS 21.2).

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people enjoy positive and trusting relationships with the staff. They flourish in a stable and supportive environment. These warm and nurturing relationships help enhance young people's experiences, progress and development. They comment that the staff know them well, help them to understand their behaviour and support them to engage in new things. One young person reported, 'If I had not been living here, I would not have gone to college, not gained confidence to go back to my home town or go into shops on my own.' This ensures young people feel secure and supported to address their worries, anxieties and behaviours effectively.

Young people have a clear understanding of key health issues and the importance of healthy lifestyles. They make their own appointments and are supported and encouraged to attend these. They access provision from the in-house psychotherapist and counsellor, and local children and adolescent mental health teams to further increase their knowledge and understanding of how their past experiences have shaped their future. A social worker commented that young people engage in most of their health appointments with staff help, despite some reluctance to do so. Whilst engagement with therapists and specialist services has been limited for some young people, social workers comment that even sporadic engagement with specialist services and positive relationship with the staff team has resulted in a reduction of self-harm incidents.

Young people increase their independent living skills in line with their age, ability and level of understanding. Young people who are 'eligible' have pathway plans in place. They have contributed to preparing these plans in a meaningful way, ensuring they are working documents. Young people develop their knowledge and life skills associated with running a home through their regular participation within the home. Young people confirm they are able to plan and prepare meals; budget; complete household chores and use household appliances. One young person reported they have developed skills in cooking, shopping and making and attending appointments independently. Consequently young people are prepared for semi-independent living and adulthood.

Young people feel supported and listened to. They report that if they want something and can be clear why this is, staff listen to them and try where possible to facilitate their requests. A young person commented that their wish to have a pet was granted recently. They reported this was agreed after they had completed a risk assessment and care plan for how they intended to care for it. This collaborative working enhances young people's confidence and self-esteem because they feel listened to and valued and respected as individuals.

Staff value the significance of contact for young people in understanding their heritage and identity and facilitate and support this skilfully. Individual contact plans are in place to ensure young people's contact is planned, safe and enjoyable, and is a positive experience for all involved. This supportive approach has helped young people maintain regular, quality contact with their family ensuring that they remain in

touch with those significant to them.

Quality of care

good

Staff are experienced at forming and sustaining positive, trusting relationships with young people, professionals and the wider community. Professionals are very positive about the quality of care and support young people receive. One social worker stated, 'The staff are very nurturing, the home offers a good all round package so (Name) is making very good progress.

Care planning and practice is highly individualised. Young people's needs are documented within their individual care plans. These plans are reviewed regularly and progress is shared with the staff team and social workers. . Young people are regularly consulted about their care plans and as such have a good understanding of their lives. This means young people are increasingly aspirational about their future and receive a cohesive and highly personalised level of support which is designed to meet their individual and diverse needs.

Young people's physical, emotional and psychological needs are recognised and addressed appropriately. Staff continually assess and monitor young people's health to ensure that they are aware of and respond to any issues or concerns promptly. Positive working relationships with specialist and partner agencies ensure that all young people are registered with a doctor, dentist and optician. Young people are actively encouraged and supported to access specialist health services as identified within their individual plans, such as children and families' mental health teams. As a consequence young people receive the correct level of support and care to ensure they achieve the best physical and emotional health possible.

Staff support and encourage young people to improve their academic opportunities. Staff have identified courses, supported young people to attend interviews and have supported young people to get to and from college. When these have proven to be ineffective, staff have worked with young people and social workers to identify strategies to overcome these barriers or highlighted suitable alternatives. As an example, some staff have undertaken Train the Trainer courses so they can complete Assessment and Qualification Alliance (AQA) certificates with young people within the home. As a result, young people are increasing their knowledge and skills and becoming better prepared for adult life.

Young people's views are routinely sought through individual key work sessions, residents meetings, weekly clinical review meetings and more informally through day to day discussions with managers and staff. Young people confirm that they know how to complain and feel they would be supported by the staff should they need to use this process. As a result young people feel valued and respected.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Staff place the well-being of young people at the centre of their work, irrespective of challenges they face. Young people state they feel safe and are kept safe. They have developed strong and meaningful relationships with the core staff team. This enables them to raise any issues or concerns as they arise and ensures that effective action is taken to reduce the incidents of risk-taking behaviour, especially with regard to self-harm. Placing authorities, independent reviewing officers and family members have no concerns about how the service safeguards and protects young people. As a consequence, young people feel safe and are kept safe.

Care plans clearly identify risks and strategies required to reduce these. Staff are aware of factors that may trigger unsafe behaviours and are proactive in taking action to minimise these. They have a good understanding of young people's needs and through positive, trusting relationships are able to encourage them to consider their actions if these are felt to be unsafe. As a result, young people have a strong sense of safety and well-being and acknowledge risks associated with their behaviours. This, together with positive working relationships with social workers and in house therapist, has reduced incidents of unauthorised absence and self-harming behaviour.

Young people acknowledge that staff have been instrumental in helping them change their behaviour for the better. They say that staff encourage them to understand their thoughts, feelings and behaviours so they can make better choices about their own behaviour. This and the effective use of positive behaviour plans encourages young people to self-regulate their own behaviour as well as undertake tasks or activities that they may not initially be willing to do. This has led to an increase in attendance at some medical and academic appointments and the reduction in the use of sanctions. There have been no incidents of physical restraint since the last inspection.

Young people's risks and vulnerabilities are continuously assessed and recorded in their risk assessments. Information in these documents is highly personalised and is routinely shared during shift handovers, clinical review meetings, supervision and team meetings. This ensures staff are aware of, and equipped to meet the present and emerging needs of the young people in their care. Social workers commented that staff are efficient and effective in observing and responding to any changes in the behaviours of young people which may lead to increased risk. As a result, risks and vulnerabilities are effectively managed to ensure young people's physical safety and emotional welfare is consistently maintained and promoted.

The home's procedures for recruiting staff are robust. Potential staff are subjected to a rigorous and challenging recruitment process. Relevant checks are undertaken prior to staff starting work to ensure they are suitable to work with vulnerable young people.

Young people live in a homely, comfortable, safe and well-maintained home which is close to all the local amenities. The home is well equipped and pleasantly furnished in each room. The dining area and study space has been decorated with the young people's achievements and memories and each bedroom has been personalised to the young person's taste. They live in a physically safe environment. This is because

a range of health and safety procedures, risk assessments and routine checks protects them. Evacuation plans are understood and regularly practiced by young people and staff.

Leadership and management

adequate

Current managerial arrangements are satisfactory, but are in a period of transition. Young people live in a home that is managed two days per week by a suitably qualified manager who has been in post since 17 March 2014. The responsible individual for the organisation is also the Registered Manager. This arrangement is supported by part time deputising arrangements. The registered person has a management succession plan for the newly-appointed deputy manager to apply to become the full-time Registered Manager within six to twelve months. He envisages this plan will come into fruition when she has successfully completed the in-house development and training plan she is presently undertaking.

The home has taken action to meet the single requirement made at the last inspection. Children's placement plans are now monitored by a key worker, thus ensuring the requirements of the plan are implemented in their day-to-day care. Managerial monitoring is not consistently thorough. There are internal systems in place to monitor the quality of care which include monthly and quarterly reviews by the management team. An independent visitor completes the Regulation 33 visits monthly to ensure external monitoring. However, this monitoring has not identified recent shortfalls in staff recording and the policies and procedures of the home, especially regarding recording when medications have been refused. Additionally, a move from paper to electronic records means that information is not always easily accessible and that not all the data is fully analysed to identify triggers and trends. Furthermore, some policies are not available to staff in the home, so they do not have handy guidance about key aspects of their work, such as their whistle-blowing responsibilities. The registered person is unclear about links with the home's geographical local safeguarding children's board. The lack of close contact with the Local Authority Designated Officer and a lack of available policies on what staff should do when an allegation is made against a staff member, has the potential to leave both young people and staff vulnerable.

Complaints have been satisfactorily managed by the registered person. There have been two complaints, one from a young person and one from neighbours within the local community since the last inspection. Following the disturbance in the local neighbourhood the home has been subject to a local authority noise abatement order since 8 May 2014. There have been no further concerns in this respect since then. Ofsted has asked the registered person to monitor the impact of the neighbourhood concerns on young people.

The Statement of Purpose and Children's' Guide provides detailed information about the home's aims and objectives. This ensures that families, placing authorities and other agencies are informed of the care and support young people can expect to receive. These documents are available on line and are shared with placing

authorities and young people when they arrive. Young people's information is securely stored and shared confidentially to protect their safety and privacy. Recordings are generally good and provide a picture of young people's daily lives. The management team works closely with staff to promote high standards of care and maintain the safety of young people. Staff performance is routinely monitored and developed through purposeful training, supervision and support. All staff are complimentary about the support, guidance and training they receive from managers and colleagues. The management team works closely with staff to promote high standards of care and maintain the safety of young people. The majority of staff have attained a relevant childcare qualification and suitable arrangements are in place for those staff who still need to complete a level 3 childcare qualification. New staff are inducted well and are given the opportunity to commence a relevant childcare qualification upon completion of their probationary period. Staff fully understand young people's diverse needs and have high aspirations for young people in achieving their individual potential.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.